Remarks

This is response to the Office Action mailed on June 18, 2003, and is filed in conjunction with the Request for Continued Examination. Claim 1 has been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

In section 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elkin et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,123,174, in view of Hyvönen at al., U.S. Patent No. 5,813,496, and Pollock, U.S. Patent No. 5,923,572. This rejection is respectfully traversed, and reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-9 are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

I. Independent Claims 1 and 6

Claims 1 and 6 generally recite a system and device for manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points. Claim 1, for example, recites that the lubrication points of the apparatus are provided with an identification element, based upon which the quantity of lubricant that is to be administered to each lubrication point in each instance of lubrication is retrievable from a memory. Claim 1 further recites that the system includes a lubricant gun having a lubrication nozzle, and that the identification element associated with the lubrication point of the apparatus is detected by a lubrication point identification device arranged at the lubrication nozzle. Claim 1 further recites that the information on the predetermined quantity of lubricant for the lubrication point is retrieved from memory, administered to the lubrication point, and information on the lubrication carried out is stored in the memory.

The system recited by claim 1 is advantageous because the system allows an apparatus to be efficiently manually lubricated at a plurality of points. In addition, a quantity of lubrication to be applied at each point including an identification element can be automatically identified using the identification device, which allows the amount of lubricant to be applied to be identified approximately simultaneously with the lubrication process itself. This can eliminate the need for an operator to go through multiple steps of inputting information to identify each lubrication point, thereby further enhancing efficiency.

Claim 6, although not identical in scope, includes limitations similar to those described above with respect to claim 1.

II. The Elkin Reference

The Elkin reference discloses a system for automatically extracting fluid from and injecting fluid into a reservoir in a vehicle. Elkin, abstract.

Elkin is not directed to a system for manual lubrication of an apparatus, as recited by claims 1. Instead, Elkin discloses an apparatus to extract and replace a large quantity of oil from a crankcase of an automobile. In other words, while the systems and devices disclosed and claimed herein are directed to manual lubrication of an apparatus, Elkin is directed replacement of fluids.

Consequently, Elkin is non-analogous art, in that one skilled in the art of manual lubrication of an apparatus would not turn to the apparatus disclosed by Elkin in solving problems associated with systems and devices for the manual lubrication of an apparatus. Further, Elkin is non-analogous art because the problem solved by Elkin (replacement of fluids) is not the same as the problem solved by the systems and devices for the manual lubrication of an apparatus disclosed herein. See MPEP 2145(IX).

In addition, the rejection states that Elkin neither discloses nor suggests a system or device for manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points. This further illustrates that Elkin is non-analogous art, because Elkin is directed at replacement of fluids, while the claims of the present application are directed at the manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points.

Further, since Elkin only discloses replacement of fluid at a single point, Elkin necessarily fails to suggest a system including a plurality of lubrication points, with each lubrication point being provided with an identification element, as recited by claim 1.

Nor does Elkin disclose identification of the lubrication point during the lubrication, as recited by claim 1. In Elkin, a vehicle to be serviced is selected by inputting the vehicle identification information. Elkin, Figure 24 and column 20, lines 17-21. After the vehicle is selected using the vehicle identification information, additional choices are made from the service menu and service can then be performed. Id. Therefore, Elkin fails to suggest lubrication points with an identification element, based upon which information on the quantity of lubricant that is to be administered to each individual lubrication point in each instance of lubrication is retrievable from a memory, as recited by claim 1.

Elkin further fails to disclose or suggest a lubrication identification device arranged at the lubrication nozzle, as recited by claim 1. Instead, Elkin discloses a barcode reader or keyboard for inputting the vehicle identification information. Elkin, column 20, lines 30-40. Such reader or keyboard is arranged separate from the delivery nozzle for the fluid. Id. Therefore, Elkin fails to disclose or suggest a lubrication point identification device arranged at a lubrication nozzle, as recited by claim 1.

III. The Hyvönen Reference

Hyvönen discloses an automated system for monitoring and controlling the circulation lubrication of the bearings of a paper machine. In Hyvönen, lubrication oil is automatically fed from an oil-lubrication center through a series of pipes to lubrication points, and is fed back to the center through a system of return pipes. Hyvönen, abstract.

It is respectfully suggested that Hyvönen is non-analogous art, since Hyvönen discloses an automated system for controlling lubrication, while claim 1 recites a system for manual lubrication. One skilled in the art of manual lubrication would not turn to Hyvönen when attempting to solve problems in the art. Further, Hyvönen is directed at solving a problem dissimilar to that solved by a system designed in accordance with claim 1, in that Hyvönen provides an automated system for lubrication including a series of pipes to deliver the lubricant, while the present application is directed at a system and device for manual lubrication using a lubricant gun.

IV. The Pollock Reference

Pollock discloses a device for controlling, authorizing, and accounting for gasoline delivered to an automobile. The device includes a radio frequency identification tag mounted on the fuel nozzle and an automotive information module mounted in the vehicle. Pollock, abstract.

For similar reasons to those provided above with respect to Elkin, Pollock is non-analogous art.

Pollock simply regulates an amount of gasoline provided to an automobile. Therefore, one skilled in the art of manual lubrication would not look to the system disclosed by Pollock for solving problems associated with the art. In addition, the problem solved by Pollock (i.e.,

controlling and accounting for gasoline dispensed into an automobile gas tank) is not pertinent to the problems addressed in the present application.

Further, like Elkin, Pollock discloses only a single fuel filling point and an automotive information module at an automobile. Therefore, Pollock fails to disclose a plurality of lubrication points, or that the lubrication points are provided with an identification element, as recited by claim 1.

V. Combination of Elkin, Hyvönen, and Pollock References

There is no motivation provided in Elkin, Hyvönen, and Pollock, or the level of skill in the art, to suggest the combination of the references. See MPEP 2143.01. As noted previously, Elkin discloses replacement of fluid from a crankcase of an automobile and Pollock discloses control of gasoline dispensed into a gas tank of an automobile. In contrast, Hyvönen discloses a lubrication circulation system for a paper machine. None of the references suggest that it would be desirable to combine a fluid replacement system or gas regulation system for an automobile (Elkin and Pollock) with a fluid circulation system for a paper machine (Hyvönen), and one skilled in the art would not motivated to combine systems configured to replace fluid in a crankcase or gas tank of an automobile with a system including a plurality of pipes to circulate fluid through the system.

VI. Conclusion

Claim 6, although not identical in scope to claim 1, includes limitations similar to those described above with respect to claim 1. For at least the reasons provided above, claims 1 and 6, as well as claims 2-5 and 7-9 that depend therefrom, should be allowable. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney with any questions regarding this application.

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